

23 September 2011

Mr N Goodwin
Headteacher
Stanley Road Community Primary School
Derby Street
Chadderton
Oldham
Greater Manchester
OL9 7HX

Dear Mr Goodwin

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Stanley Road Community Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 22 September 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. I am also grateful to the Chair of the Governing Body, the groups of parents and pupils and the local authority representative who spent time speaking with me.

As a result of the inspection on 5 and 6 July 2010 the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter. Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school has made satisfactory progress in making improvements and good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Leaders across the school have shown great determination to bring about improvements. These improvements have included refining their use of assessment information, making mathematics lessons more practical in nature, increasing the confidence of teachers in teaching mathematics, improving the quality of marking, and a rise in the standards pupils attain in mathematics. Examples of improved practice are outlined below.

- Assessment information has been successfully refined in order to produce analyses of the performance of pupils and to allow leaders, at regular intervals, to hold staff to account for the progress pupils are making. What it does not do as clearly at present is compare the progress pupils make in their learning to the targets they were set.
- The teaching of mathematics is more practical in nature, for example with pupils using their knowledge of number bonds to make different totals. Both pupils and parents spoken with during this monitoring inspection were positive about how such activities were helping to stimulate interest and thinking.
- As a result of staff training, teachers are increasingly confident in teaching mathematics and developing their knowledge of the subject. There is still a tendency

for staff to rely too heavily on published plans which do not always cater for the needs of the pupils in that lesson, meaning that not all are challenged as well as they could be.

- The quality of marking has improved and is more consistent. Marking, especially in mathematics, is more closely aligned to the learning objectives of the lesson. The use of specific criteria for success and the sharing of these with pupils are ensuring pupils have a clearer idea of what they are to learn. Where consistency is less strong is in the way teachers identify the next steps of learning. Sometimes this is sharp, but at other times it is vague.
- The standards in mathematics attained by pupils by the time they leave school at the end of Year 6 have continued to rise, although they still remain low when compared to the national average. More pupils than in previous years attained the higher Level 5. The proportion of pupils attaining Level 4 in both English and mathematics has also continued to rise, although this figure is also low.

During the course of this monitoring inspection four mathematics lessons and one English lesson were observed. In lessons where the inspector and senior leaders made judgements together, all were in agreement. This demonstrates leaders' accuracy in identifying strengths and areas for development. In all five lessons observed good elements of teaching and learning were evident. For example, good quality, direct teaching and ongoing assessment focusing on securing pupils' ability to order numbers on number lines, enabled the teacher to identify strengths and weaknesses in the understanding of pupils. While teachers are increasingly asking the right questions to check their pupils' understanding, the information gained from this is not always translated into revised activities which results, for some pupils, in a lack of challenge.

The schools' leaders, teachers, and the governing body have a clear awareness of how far the school has travelled and what it still has to do. All agree, and this monitoring inspection confirms this view, that the strategies to secure improvements are embedding rather than embedded, hence why progress in making such improvements is satisfactory rather than good. Nonetheless, what has been achieved in just a year has been the result of the determination of leaders, staff and the governing body. The challenge and support from the local authority has been good. The confidence the parents, pupils and the local authority have in the school is well placed.

I hope that you have found the inspection helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Mark Williams
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in July 2010

- Raise attainment, particularly in mathematics, by:
 - strengthening pupils' knowledge of basic skills such as adding and times tables
 - ensuring practical activities have a sharp focus and adult intervention moves learning forward at a faster pace
 - raising expectations of what pupils can achieve and ensuring work set meets the needs of all, especially the more able
 - ensuring marking, especially in mathematics, relates consistently to learning objectives, identifies areas for improvement and provides pupils with opportunities to respond.

- Ensure leaders and managers refine their use of assessment information by using the new electronic tracking system to analyse thoroughly the performance of all groups of pupils in order to accelerate progress.